

SCHOOL DISTRICT REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

DRAFT WORK PLAN

CHARGE

- Review all current common school districts that are not part of a unified school district and consider combining these into a new or existing unified district to create districts that offer instruction to students in programs for preschool children with disabilities and kindergarten programs and grades one through twelve.
 - In determining whether districts should be combined, consider:
 - Geographic boundaries and travel time of pupils.
 - Enlarging or diminishing the size of affected school districts.
 - Use by any of the affected districts of A.R.S. §15-910 or §15-910.01.
 - Estimated adjustment of both the primary and secondary tax rates of the affected districts.
 - Application of a career ladder program if not all of the affected districts currently participate.
 - Application of overrides authorized under A.R. S. title 15, chapter 4, article 4.
 - Estimated potential savings and efficiencies to be achieved through the recommended unification.
 - Application of teacher experience indexes and existing salary schedules of affected districts.
 - Potential impact on facilities needs due to unification.
 - Elimination of statutory budget exemptions for school districts with a student count less than one hundred twenty five.
 - In addition, in determining whether districts should be combined, the following guidelines shall be adhered to:
 - Unorganized territories shall be included within recommended unified districts where practicable.
 - All school districts in this state shall be unified districts that serve students in at least all grades from kindergarten through grade twelve, unless the commission determines otherwise.

- School districts shall be classified as rural unified school districts if their student count is less than five hundred.
 - School districts shall be classified as independent unified school districts if their student count is more than six thousand.
- Develop a plan for unorganized territories that requires the inclusion of areas where at least one per cent of the population attends a public school within the boundaries of a unified school district.
- Review existing statewide or regional educational service agencies and establish, where necessary, new statewide or regional educational service agencies to provide for the noninstructional support of school districts in the state.
- Develop a statewide uniform school district naming convention under which each school district would be assigned a legal designation by county and school district number.
- Hold public hearings throughout the state including rural school districts and hear testimony regarding the unification of every affected school district.
- Draft a proposed school district unification plan. The plan shall:
 - Provide for regional or statewide services for administration, instructional and noninstructional support services to rural or isolated schools and rural and isolated school districts, or any other school district that wishes to participate in the service plan.
 - Ensure a smooth and efficient transition from the current number of school districts in this state to the number of school districts proposed in the school district unification plan, including considering:
 - Increasing the membership of school district governing boards to nine members, especially in large school districts and school districts located in urban areas.
 - Allowing for elected members of existing school district governing boards to serve out the remainder of their terms.
 - Ensure that the unification plan preserves local control while at the same time maximizes an efficient and cost-effective delivery of educational services.
 - Provide for specific mechanisms for the payment of legal liabilities, contractual obligations, capital overrides previously accumulated by school districts before the implementation of the unification plan and the acquisition of legal liabilities, contractual obligations, capital debt and overrides by school districts after the implementation of the unification plan.

- Identify costs attributable to a unification plan subject to the approval of the joint legislative budget committee.
- Estimate the impact to the state general fund if the proposed recommendations are approved by the voters in the affected school districts and estimate cost of the elections required by the unification recommendations for reimbursement to the school districts.